



March 4, 2023

H.B. No. 6800 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC BOOK AND DIGITAL AUDIOBOOK LICENSING

Dear Senator Rahman, Representative Kavros DeGraw, and Honorable Members of the Planning & Development Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 6800. My name is Gretchen DelCegno. I am a resident of Bristol and Library Director of the Terryville Public Library in Plymouth, CT.

While circulation of physical library items remain robust at our Library, over the last five years, we have also seen a 170% increase in circulation of eBooks and eAudiobooks. Our budget has not been able to keep up, increasing just 110% over the same period.

Historically, Connecticut's libraries pay twice as much for an eBook license as we do a hardcover copy of the same title. However, unlike a physical book, these eBook licenses typically expire after a set period of time or a certain number of checkouts, which require us to purchase the license again or have the title removed from our collection. Additionally, libraries often pay up to six times more for digital licenses than the general consumer. Remember – Connecticut libraries are primarily funded by taxpayers, so these exorbitant costs and unreasonable terms aren't a good deal for anybody but the publishers. CT taxpayers are being overcharged!

I strongly support HB 6800. HB 6800 establishes fair contract terms so that publishers can make money, libraries can build robust and sustainable digital collections, and taxpayers aren't overcharged. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will listen to their constituents who support this bill and voted for you in order to be heard. Together, we can ensure that electronic resources are available at a fair price to libraries and the taxpayers who use them.

Thank you for your time,

Gretchen DelCegno
Library Director